

**Maryland Transportation Authority
Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group**

Meeting Summary

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, January 5, 2011
MDTA Bay Bridge Police Building

PRESENT: Jack Broderick, Chairman
Barbara Hitchings
Nancy Wright
Nick Deoudes
Barbara Spann Obert

MDTA staff:
Gail Moran
Kerry Brandt
Maurice Saxon
Gordon Garrettson
Kevin Weber
Kathie Raynor

Call to Order:

Chairman Jack Broderick called the meeting of the Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group (BBRAG) to order at 6:10 pm. He welcomed all attendees. Mr. Broderick expressed gratitude to Sam Triandos for her assistance to the BBRAG and wishes her well in her next endeavors. Ms. Triandos is retiring from State service and joining the Peace Corps in March.

Mr. Broderick said that news reports indicate that Doug Hutcheson has been appointed Chief Engineer of the Maryland Transportation Authority. He praised Mr. Hutcheson and said that he will look forward to working with Mr. Hutcheson at future meetings.

Nancy Wright thanked Mr. Hutcheson and Gordon Garrettson for participating in the December 2, 2010, meeting of the Broadneck Federation.

Barbara Spann Obert praised the presentation given at the October meeting by Mr. Hutcheson and Dan Williams on bridge inspections. She said that it was an excellent presentation -- one she wishes that other BBRAG members could see. It reflects all of the work on the Bay Bridge, she said. Mr. Broderick echoed those sentiments and said that he regrets that there was a small attendance at the October meeting.

Minutes: Members noted three minor changes to the October meeting notes and asked that those changes be made in the official record. Barbara Hutchings moved approval of the minutes; Ms. Spann Obert seconded the motion, which was approved by all.

Bridge Updates:

Kevin Weber reported that American Bridge, the construction company for the Bay Bridge re-decking, has completed its work. Again, Mr. Broderick praised the re-decking efforts and all those involved. Other work includes:

- Cable inspections on the westbound span continue.
- Cable inspections on the eastbound span are complete.
- Eight cables are to be replaced on the eastbound span; two are to be replaced on the westbound span.
- Eastbound parapet retrofitting and painted is complete.
- New cable wrapping will be done this summer. The cables will be wrapped with neoprene. Most likely, this work will not impact traffic.
- Security fencing will be installed on the eastbound anchor piers and westbound concrete piers; concrete repair work will be done on the perimeter of the islands. This work should begin some time in February.
- Lane-use signals will be changed, replacing the LED lamps.
- Painting will be done on the westbound span. Sallis Brothers will begin early this spring on the steel girders. Work will be done from the water and will have little impact on bridge traffic. The project will last about one and a half years
- A painting project for the suspension span will be advertised this spring. Work will begin on the western shore and move east on the westbound span. All existing lead will be sandblasted prior to painting. The eastbound span has no lead; it has been removed. The westbound span still has lead, which will be removed by this action.
- On the westbound span, an acoustical-monitoring system will be installed. Staff are awaiting electrical connections before this project can begin.
- A four-year contract has been signed with Murphy, Byrd and Phillips to repair deficiencies which are identified by inspections. This contract is an on-call contract.

Other bridge information:

Gordon Garrettson reported that there will be eastbound closures at the toll booths for necessary repairs to improve traffic flow. Repairs will include work to the underground corridors leading to the toll booths. This work will necessitate the temporary closing of Lane 11 at the toll booth. During this period, trucks will use the access road.

- Two-way operations will continue on Mondays and Tuesdays, with no contra-flow traffic on the westbound span during rush hour until traffic counts increase in late spring. In addition, afternoon rush-hour traffic soon will be limited on Wednesdays to the eastbound span, as traffic volumes decrease. This will change when traffic volumes increase in the spring.
- Maintenance now is in a six-day operation. It will go into a seven-day operation when the weather improves and work increases.
- Painting will be done on the barrier wall of the westbound span. The goal is that by the peak season, all barrier wall and line painting will be completed by in-house labor.
- Roadway patching in the plaza will be done this spring as well.

Public communications outreach:

Kathie Raynor, MDTA Director of Traffic Management, reported on BaySpan and other public information outreach efforts concerning the Bay Bridge. She said that currently, the BaySpan system can handle 144 calls at one time. The coverage area on the Eastern Shore has been expanded to MD 404 in Talbot County. She acknowledged that there have been programming problems on three recent Fridays and Saturdays. However, there have been very few complaints.

Kerry Brandt said that there were 1.5 million calls to BaySpan during Fiscal Year 2010. In addition, there were 372,000 hits on the webpage, of which 299,000 were new visitors. Eight thousand people have signed up for Bay Bridge email alerts.

Ms. Raynor said that traffic travel times are now posted on LED signs. She also said that the State is going to a 511 system statewide. There will be four regions in Maryland. This will allow drivers to call 511 and secure information on many road systems, including the Bay Bridge. MDTA will be abandoning the BaySpan number to comply with federal requirements, which preclude its advertising a 10-digit number on LED and other highway signs.

A tour of the BaySpan communications operation, located in the Bay Bridge police/maintenance building, followed the meeting. Members were shown traffic monitors and talked with staff about the operation.

Other business:

Responding to a question from Mr. Broderick, Ms. Brandt said that MDTA staff has talked with Maryland Public Television staff about a planned production on the Bay Bridge. One week of filming is complete. Ms. Brandt will provide additional information when it is available.

Nick Deoudes said that Queen Anne's County Sheriff Hoffman would like to come to a future BBAG meeting to answer questions. Mr. Deoudes also asked about the "Stay In Lane" signs on the bridges. He suggested that the signs should just direct drivers not to pass. He said there are many who change lanes on the bridge. Mr. Garrettson said that the signs have been removed from the bridge. He added that traffic engineering staff is looking at the problem and it is hoped that solutions will be in place by this summer.

Gail Moran reported that the General Assembly comes into session on January 12. The MDTA is not proposing any legislation, she said.

Responding to a question from Mr. Broderick, Ms. Moran said that Harold Bartlett is the MDTA's Acting Executive Secretary. Mr. Bartlett plans to retire once a replacement is on board.

Maurice Saxon said that the Department of Natural Resources plans to replace the stone jetty at Sandy Point State Park, adjacent to the Bay Bridge facility.

Next meeting:

The next meeting of the BBRAG is Wednesday, April 6, 2011.

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

*Submitted by,
Gail Moran*